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EDITORIAL.

In many sections of Central Canada the want of rain for several weeks has caused a serious failure of the pastures and a consequent falling off in the milk product of dairy cows, and a loss of condition in young cattle. These conditions serve to emphasize the necessity of making provisions for some succulent fodder to supplement the supply of feed when the pastures fail, as they are liable to do and as they generally do in the summer months. It is better to be sure of a supply than sorry for having neglected it.

The unusually large amount of space devoted to stock gossip in this issue may fairly be taken as an indication of the healthy condition of that branch of farming and of the increasing interest taken in improved stock in all lines. The fact that so much attention is being given to this industry in the busy days of the harvest season is a wholesome augury of the brisk trade in breeding stock which is sure to follow the "harvest home," and breeders will do well to put themselves in touch with prospective buyers, before the fairs begin, by advertising what they have to offer.

The fall wheat crop in Ontario has been harvested in excellent condition, and will yield well in most sections of the Province. Even in the localities where it did not promise well in the spring it picked up well before harvest time, and has proved better than was expected. The dry, hot weather of the last three weeks has not been conducive to the best returns from the crops of oats and peas. The former will in consequence be generally short in straw and, from rapid ripening, probably imperfectly filled, but the straw will be of excellent quality.

In passing through the country in the summer weeks one is struck with the fact that a very large proportion of farmers fail to adopt the best methods of handling plowed land in preparation for a wheat crop. It is common at this season to plow a clover sod or a barley stubble field for the purpose of seeding it with fall wheat. In the majority of cases the land in the field so plowed is left in the furrows as they have been turned, exposed to the influence of the sun and wind, which thoroughly evaporates every vestige of moisture from the soil, leaving it in a condition in which little, if any, decomposition of the sod can take place to convert it into plant food to feed the crop of wheat when sown, and at the same time rendering the land much more difficult to reduce to a fine state of tilth. There is no time when the soil will so readily crumble under the application of the roller and harrow as on the day it is plowed; to leave it exposed to sun and wind for more than half a day makes the work of fining the soil much more expensive by reason of the added time and labor required. To make the best use of the time and of the land, it should be rolled with a heavy roller immediately after plowing, to press the soil, which aids moisture to rise from below into the plowed land, and to hasten the decomposition of the sod. The rolling should be followed by thorough harrowing to prevent the escape of moisture. The harrowing should be repeated, especially after each shower of rain, in order to get the greatest benefit from it. A field so treated will be found to contain sufficient moisture to start the growth of the seed when sowing time arrives, even though little or no rain has fallen in the interval. Knowing how liable we are to late summer drouths, it is wise to treat the land intended for wheat on the assumption that a drouth will occur, and thus be prepared for the worst that may come.

The Fair Season.

The list of fairs for 1898 has been reduced by the number of those which have been held in Manitoba in the month of July. The Winnipeg Industrial, thanks to the good management of the directors, the improved aspect of business, and the fine weather, proved a grand success, the stock show being the best ever seen there and the attendance the largest in its history, as our report in this issue indicates. Winnipeg has set the pace for the fairs of this year. Toronto, with its mammoth Industrial, has fixed its date at August 29th to Sept. 10th, and all indications point to the usual success, if not the realization of a higher standard than ever before attained. The prize list promises \$35,000 in premiums, by far the most liberal list of all the Provincial and State fairs on the continent, and the Association has undoubtedly the greatest aggregation of exhibition buildings in the Dominion. No show within our ken gives better value for the admission fee, nor so varied and extensive a combination of interesting, instructive and useful demonstrations of the capabilities of our country in agriculture and the arts and sciences.

The Western Fair at London follows close upon the heels of the Toronto event, with its silver jubilee exhibition, and has its dates fixed at Sept. 8th to 17th, the live stock section being planned to open on the Monday after the close of the Industrial. The Western Fair has had a singularly successful career, and is one of the most attractive and satisfactory exhibitions on the continent. Its grounds are charming, its buildings extensive and convenient in every department, its officers competent, courteous and energetic, its prize list liberal and comprehensive, and its location in one of the most beautiful cities in Canada. Visitors all and always carry away pleasant recollections of the Forest City and a favorable opinion of the Western Fair.

The Central Canada Exhibition at Ottawa ranks as one of the very best shows in the Dominion, and each succeeding year finds the exhibition improved, the grounds and buildings enlarged, the attendance increased and the interest enhanced. The buildings for the accommodation of stock are now among the most comfortable, complete and satisfactory to exhibitors and visitors to be found on any fair grounds in Canada. The prize list has been increased, and no fewer than thirty gold medals are this year offered in as many classes, in addition to the regular liberal cash prizes. Exhibitors are agreed that at no other exhibition are their needs and requirements more cheerfully met or their wishes more courteously heard and considered by the officers and directors than at Ottawa. The Capital is, at the season of the exhibition, one of the most interesting cities in the Dominion to visitors, and such favorable railway excursion rates are secured for this, as well as for all the exhibitions named, that an opportunity is afforded to the people to enjoy a pleasant and profitable outing at small expense.

The leading shows in the Maritime Provinces are the Provincial fixtures of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, the former at St. John, Sept. 13-23, and the latter at Halifax, Sept. 22-29. These events are growing in interest from year to year and promise to be better this year than ever before. Prince Edward Island is not holding a Provincial Fair this year, and Quebec has its Provincial at the Ancient Capital, Quebec City, September 12-21. There is no announcement of a show at Montreal for this year. We confidently anticipate more than the usual amount of interest in the fairs of 1898. Times are better than for many years. Crops are abundant and prices improved. There is a vastly more cheerful aspect in all lines of business and a more hopeful outlook for the future. Farmers as a class have had a hard time for several years past,

but the clouds have passed away and the sun shines on them now. They are entitled to a little outing, and the fairs afford the opportunity of combining business with pleasure. There are many valuable lessons to be learned by careful observation of the results of the skill and application of improved methods by our fellow farmers and stock breeders, and nowhere can these be more satisfactorily studied than at the fairs, where comparisons may be made. Who has not noticed that in many cases an animal seen at home on the farm and estimated as being up to the standard of first-class has fallen many degrees in our mental barometer when brought alongside others of superior quality and more up-to-date in type and quality. The fairs set the standard of excellence in all lines of stock and many other products of the farm, and no one desiring to be reckoned a progressive farmer can afford to miss the opportunity they provide for studying the highest types of animals and the most approved methods of producing the best quality of products in all lines of agriculture and manufactures.

Canadian Bacon Capturing the British Market.

"There is no doubt," said an observant Ontario man, who had just returned from a trip to the Old Country with his fat cattle, to a member of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE staff a few days ago, "that Canadian bacon has caught the British market." This is evident from the fancy position held by the Canadian product on the weekly lists of quotations issued by Old Country provision dealers, and from the increase of Canadian exports to Britain during the past ten years. In that short period the value has mounted up from about half a million dollars per annum to \$5,844,841 worth in 1897, a jump of \$1,397,907, compared with 1896, and 1898 will probably show another advance even greater. Canadian packers are reporting a depreciation in the quality of Danish and Irish bacon, which is stimulating the demand for the Canadian product. As a matter of fact, Canadian hams are frequently sold as English "Wiltshire," Irish or Danish, by unscrupulous dealers, so that Canadian hog raisers and curers are not getting full credit, as has also been the case in the cheese trade, but which is being overcome by careful branding. But Great Britain imports nearly \$55,000,000 worth of these pork products, and last year Canada sent less than \$6,000,000 worth. We send England more than half of all the cheese she imports; our butter trade is developing rapidly, and we know of no reason why our shipments of bacon, hams, etc., should not at least correspond with that of cheese, or reach the vast sum of \$25,000,000 worth per year! Swine raising is the natural adjunct of dairying.

From some of our packers we have received warning reports that during the past three months they have been getting from some parts of Ontario too large a proportion of hogs that dress soft or "flannelly" pork, attributed by some to corn and clover feeding. However this may prove, we again warn our readers, as we have done repeatedly for years past, to guard against the wholesale and uncleanly methods pursued by Western States corn-feeders, which result in big, fat carcasses, and too often bring hog cholera in their train, a touch of which Essex and Kent farmers have had, to their sorrow, in years gone by. Stick to safe, successful plans.

Within a comparatively recent date we have witnessed the introduction and development of the bacon enterprise in the Maritime Provinces to the East and Manitoba in the West, while numbers of new establishments, such as those in Collingwood, London, and Toronto, have cropped up in Ontario—the old center of industry. We noticed a few days ago that the Wm. Davies Packing Co., of Toronto, were spending about \$60,000 in extending their works; and Park, Blackwell & Co., a new concern